

In 1844, Morse sent the first electric telegraph message. As described by the Library of Congress, " His system used an automatic sender consisting of a plate with long and short metal bars representing the Morse code equivalent of the alphabet and numbers. The operator slid a pointer connected to a battery and the sending wire across the bars, and immediately the appropriate dots and dashes were sent over the line. The receiver used an electromagnet with a stylus (a pen-like instrument) on the end of an arm. When the magnet operated, the stylus made an impression or tiny dent in a paper tape which wound past a clockwork motor. The tape was then read by the operator".

Morse never intended his code to be memorized.

One hundred and sixty years later we are arguing whether the Morse code should be memorized to obtain a hobbyist amateur radio license. For nearly a hundred years, memorizing the Morse code has been used as a means to exclude persons, often otherwise qualified, from participating in the amateur radio hobby, much like the "Jim Crow Laws" excluded African Americans from voting. The FCC stated in creating the code free Technician license in 1990 that memorizing the Morse code "serves no regulatory purpose". It is time to bury the Morse code memorization debate.

The specific idea that I support is the ARRL proposal with the Morse code requirement eliminated for all classes for all time.

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